

NCA
VOC FOR PGM/FN
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AL GRIGIS

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ANZUS COUNCIL MEETING

ANNCR:

REPRESENTATIVES OF AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND THE UNITED STATES ARE MEETING IN WASHINGTON THIS WEEK FOR THE ANNUAL ANZUS COUNCIL MEETING. VOA'S AL GRIGIS HAS THIS BACKGROUND REPORT.

VOICE:

THE ANZUS ALLIANCE -- FORMED IN 1952 -- IS A CORNERSTONE OF U.S. PACIFIC SECURITY RELATIONSHIPS AND RECOGNIZES THAT AN ARMED ATTACK IN THE PACIFIC AREA ON A MEMBER COUNTRY IS AN ATTACK ENDANGERING THE PEACE AND SAFETY OF THE GROUP. IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, ALL MEMBERS ARE PLEDGED TO ACT TO MEET THE COMMON DANGER. SINCE ITS INCEPTION, HOWEVER, THE ALLIANCE HAS NEVER BEEN INVOLVED IN A WARTIME SITUATION IN THE PACIFIC.

THE ANZUS COUNCIL, COMPOSED OF THE FOREIGN MINISTERS OR DEPUTIES OF THE UNITED STATES, NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA, MEETS ANNUALLY TO DISCUSS GLOBAL AND REGIONAL SECURITY AND ECONOMIC ISSUES.

PRESIDENT CARTER, DURING THE VISIT TO WASHINGTON LAST NOVEMBER OF NEW ZEALAND PRIME MINISTER ROBERT MULDOON, NOTED THAT THE ANZUS ALLIANCE HAS BEEN "A BASIS FOR A FIRM FOUNDATION OF MILITARY AND POLITICAL COMRADESHIP." EARLIER, AUSTRALIA'S PRIME MINISTER MALCOLM FRASER, IN TALKS WITH MISTER MULDOON, REITERATED HIS CONCERN ABOUT THE SOVIET NAVAL BUILDUP IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. BOTH LEADERS AGREED THAT THE THREAT UNDERScoreD THE NEED AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ANZUS TREATY, WHICH LINKS THE TWO COUNTRIES IN A DEFENSE PACT WITH THE UNITED STATES.

THE ALLIANCE ALSO REINFORCES THE BASIS FOR A U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC, AND IS OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE TO THE UNITED STATES IN AN AREA WHERE THE FORCES OF CHANGE ARE INTENSIFYING.

CURRENTLY, THE U.S. HAS FOUR DEFENSE FACILITIES IN AUSTRALIA AND TWO IN NEW ZEALAND. U.S. NUCLEAR-POWERED SHIPS ARE ALSO PERMITTED TO DOCK IN AUSTRALIAN PORTS FOLLOWING PRIME MINISTER FRASER'S LIFTING OF A PREVIOUS BAN. THERE IS CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE THREE MEMBER COUNTRIES, INCLUDING REGULAR DEFENSE CONSULTATIONS AND JOINT MILITARY EXERCISES.

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